CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A system configured to access a media file, comprising:

a sender client configured to provide a location message comprising at least one recipient address and a handle to a media file;

at least one receiver client; and

a server configured to receive the location message from the sender client and to provide the location message to one of the receiver clients that corresponds with each of the recipient addresses;

wherein each receiver client is configured to receive the location message from the server, and to access the media file from a source selected from the sender client and a peer receiver client.

2. The system of claim 1, wherein the sender client is selected from a personal video recorder, a personal computer, a workstation, a video camcorder and a personal digital assistant.

3. The system of claim 1, wherein the receiver client is selected from a personal video recorder, a personal computer, a workstation, a video camcorder and a personal digital assistant.

4. The system of claim 1, wherein the server is selected from a personal video recorder, a personal computer, a workstation, an application service provider and a remote server accessed via an internet.

5. The system of claim 1, wherein the location message further comprises information selected from a title of the media file, a date stamp of the media file, a time stamp of the media file, a copyright indication for the media file, a preview of the media file and at least one text field.

6. The system of claim 1 wherein the addresses are of a type selected from a user identifier (ID) on said server, an Internet domain name of said server, an Internet Protocol (IP) address, an e-mail address, a user identifier (ID) on a local network, a client identifier (ID) on a local network and a client address on a bus.

7. The system of claim 1 wherein at least a portion of the media file is stored and transferred in a format selected from a format compatible with one of the Motion Picture Expert Group (MPEG) standards, MPEG-2, and MP3.

8. The system of claim 1, wherein:

the sender client is further configured to use a protocol to provide the location message to the server; and

the server is further configured to use the protocol to receive the location message;

wherein the protocol is selected from video mail input output (VMIO) transfer and control protocols, a protocol based Post Office Protocol 3 (POP3), a protocol based on a Simple Mail Transfer Protocol (SMTP), and a protocol based on a Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP).

9. The system of claim 1, wherein:

the server is further configured to use a protocol to provide the location message to the receiver client; and

the recipient client is further configured to use the protocol to receive the location message; and

the protocol is selected from video mail input output (VMIO) transfer and control protocols, a protocol based Post Office Protocol 3 (POP3), a protocol based on a Simple Mail Transfer Protocol (SMTP), and a protocol based on a Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP).

10. The system of claim 1, wherein the server is further configured to check for a connection to the receiver client, and to provide the location message when the check finds that the connection is active.

11. The system of claim 1, wherein:

the receiver client is further configured to notify the server when the receiver client is available to receive the location message; and

the server is further configured to provide the location message in response to the server receiving the notification that the receiver client is available.

12. The system of claim 1, wherein the receiver client is further configured to, upon receipt of the location message, to check for a connection to the sender client on which to receive the media file, and if none is found to check for a connection to the peer receiver client on which to receive the media file.

13. The system of claim 1, further comprising:

a connection from the sender client to the receiver client upon which the transfer of the media file occurs, the connection being selected from an Internet-based connection, a connection based on a Transmission Control Protocol / Internet Protocol (TCP/IP) and a connection based on a User Datagram Protocol (UDP).

14. The system of claim 1, further comprising:

a connection from the sender client to the server upon which the location message is transferred, the connection being selected from an Internet-based connection, a connection based on a Transmission Control Protocol / Internet Protocol (TCP/IP) and a connection based on a User Datagram Protocol (UDP).

15. The system of claim 1, further comprising:

a connection from the receiver client to the server upon which the notification set is transferred, the connection being selected from an Internet-based connection, a

connection based on a Transmission Control Protocol / Internet Protocol (TCP/IP) and a connection based on a User Datagram Protocol (UDP).

16. An system for accessing a media file, comprising:

a sender client coupled to provide a location message comprising at least one recipient address and a handle to a media file;

at least one receiver client; and

a server coupled to receive the location message from the sender client and for providing the location message to one of the receiver clients that corresponds with each of the recipient addresses;

wherein each receiver client is coupled to receive the location message from the server and to access the media file from a source selected from the sender client and a peer receiver client.

17. The system of claim 16, wherein the sender client is selected from a personal video recorder, a personal computer, a workstation, a video camcorder and a personal digital assistant.

18. The system of claim 16, wherein the receiver client is selected from a personal video recorder, a personal computer, a workstation, a video camcorder and a personal digital assistant.

19. The system of claim 16, wherein the server is selected from a personal video recorder, a personal computer, a workstation, an application service provider and a remote server accessed via an internet.

20. The system of claim 16, wherein the location message further comprises information selected from a title of the media file, a date stamp of the media file, a time stamp of the media file, a copyright indication for the media file, a preview of the media file and at least one text field.

21. The system of claim 16 wherein the addresses are of a type selected from a user identifier (ID) on said server, an Internet domain name of said server, an Internet Protocol (IP) address, an e-mail address, a user identifier (ID) on a local network a client identifier (ID) on a local network and a client address on a bus.

22. The system of claim 16 wherein the media file is stored and transferred in a format selected from a format compatible with one of the Motion Picture Expert Group (MPEG) standards, MPEG-2, and MP3.

23. The system of claim 16, wherein:

the receiver client is further configured to use a protocol to provide the location message to the server; and

the server is further a configured to receive the location message according to the protocol;

wherein the protocol is selected from video mail input output (VMIO) transfer and control protocols, a protocol based Post Office Protocol 3 (POP3), a protocol based on a Simple Mail Transfer Protocol (SMTP), and a protocol based on a Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP).

24. The system of claim 16, wherein:

the server is further configured to use a protocol for providing the location message to the receiver client;

the receiver client is further configured to use the protocol to receive the location message; and

the protocol is selected from video mail input output (VMIO) transfer and control protocols, a protocol based Post Office Protocol 3 (POP3), a protocol based on a Simple Mail Transfer Protocol (SMTP), and a protocol based on a Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP).

25. The system of claim 16, wherein the server is further configured to check for a connection to the receiver client, and to provide the location message when the check finds that the connection is active.

26. The system of claim 16, wherein:

the receiver client is further configured to notify the server when the receiver client is available to receive the location message; and

the server is further configured to provide the location message in response to the server receiving the notification that the receiver client is available.

27. The system of claim 16, wherein the receiver client is further configured to, upon receipt of the location message, to check for a connection to the sender client on which to receive the media file, and if none is found checking for a connection to the peer receiver client on which to receive the media file.

28. The system of claim 16, further comprising:

a connection from the sender client to the receiver client upon which the transfer of the media file occurs, the connection being selected from selected from an Internet-based connection, a connection based on a Transmission Control Protocol / Internet Protocol (TCP/IP) and a connection based on a User Datagram Protocol (UDP).

29. The system of claim 16, further comprising:

a connection from the sender client to the server upon which the address set is transferred, the connection being selected from an Internet-based connection, a connection based on a Transmission Control Protocol / Internet Protocol (TCP/IP) and a connection based on a User Datagram Protocol (UDP).

30. The system of claim 16, further comprising:

a connection from the receiver client to the server upon which the notification is transferred, the connection being selected from an Internet-based communication, a communication based on a Transmission Control Protocol / Internet Protocol (TCP/IP) and a communication channel based on a User Datagram Protocol (UDP).

31. A method of delivering a media file, comprising:

providing a location message from a sender client to a server, the location message comprising at least one recipient address and a handle for a media file;

providing the location message from the server to a receiver client that corresponds with each of the recipient addresses; and

accessing the media file on the receiver client from a source selected from the sender client and a peer receiver client.

32. The method of claim 31, wherein the sender client is selected from a personal video recorder, a personal computer, a workstation, a video camcorder and a personal digital assistant.

33. The method of claim 31, wherein the receiver client is selected from a personal video recorder means, a personal computer means, a workstation means, a video camcorder means and a personal digital assistant means.

34. The method of claim 31, wherein the server selected from a personal video recorder means, a personal computer means, a workstation means, an application service provider means and a remote server means accessed via the Internet.

35. The method of claim 31, wherein the location method further comprises information selected from a title of the media file, a date stamp of the media file, a time stamp of the media file, a copyright indication for the media file and at least one text field.

36. The method of claim 31 wherein the addresses are of a type selected from a user identifier (ID) on said server, an Internet domain name of said server, an Internet Protocol (IP) address, an e-mail address, a user identifier (ID) on a local network a client identifier (ID) on a local network and a client address on a bus.

37. The method of claim 31 wherein the media file is stored and transferred in a format selected from a format compatible with one of the Motion Picture Expert Group (MPEG) standards, MPEG-2, and MP3.

38. The method of claim 31, further comprising:

using a protocol to provide the location message, the protocol is selected from video mail input output (VMIO) transfer and control protocols, a protocol based Post

Office Protocol 3 (POP3), a protocol based on a Simple Mail Transfer Protocol (SMTP), and a protocol based on a Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP).

39. The method of claim 31, further comprising:

checking for a connection to the receiver means; and

providing the location message when the checking finds that the connection is active.

40. The method of claim 31, further comprising:

notifying the server when the receiver client is connected to the network and able to receive the location message; and

providing the location message in response to receiving the notification.

41. The method of claim 31, further comprising:

checking, upon receipt of the notification at the receiver client, for a connection from the receiver client to the sender client on which to access the media file; and

if none is found, checking for a connection to the other receiver client on which to access the media file.

42. The method of claim 31, further comprising:

accessing the media file on the receiver client from the sender client via a method selected from an Internet-based communication method, a communication method based on a Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP) or File Transfer Protocol (FTP).

43. The method of claim 31, further comprising:

delivering the location message via a method selected from an Internet-based communication method, a communication method based on a Transmission Control Protocol / Internet Protocol (TCP/IP) and a communication method based on a User Datagram Protocol (UDP).